

LWV MP/NWMC Report of Maricopa County Recorders'
9/28/17 Civic Engagement Roundtable

Attended by Rivko Knox and Susan Penner
(Co-Authors)

1) Opening. The meeting was scheduled to last an hour but it lasted almost 2-1/2. I'm not complaining by a long shot, just want people to know how dedicated the staff at the Elections Department is to addressing our issues. (Editorial Comment by Susan: Speaking of dedicated people, Rivko was there after attending the Clean Elections meeting earlier in the day. She introduced me to the AZ Advocacy Network people and a gentleman from the ACLU.) Present were representatives of: LWV (of course), ACLU, AzAN, C.A.S.E., Promise AZ, the AZ Students' Association, and a foreign visitor from Liberia!!!

2) Mr. Fontes explained that the building was in lock down because election materials were in house therefore the need for escorts.

3) Voter Registration Forms. He stated that the limit of 50 voter registration forms taken at one time has been lifted. People do have to say where and why they may need more than 100.

4) Prop 200. Fontes explained about Proposition 200 that required proof of citizenship for a state registration form, which the Supreme Court in 2013 determined was constitutional; however, it did NOT speak to how it was to be implemented As applied in its present form. it was denying people the right to vote in other than Federal elections. This policy shift will now change that and make a major improvement in the system. He welcomed and encouraged the representative from the ACLU to sue. The Secretary of State is also challenging him. More later from Mary Fontes, Voter Registration Director.

5) Ballot on Demand. He spoke about the new and always improving "Ballot On Demand" system and the all "Ballot By Mail" system being tested in local and jurisdictional elections this fall. Fontes said he is moving away from "Mail in Ballot" because some people don't trust or want to mail in a ballot. So, the new terminology is "Ballot by Mail" (because then each voter has the choice of either mailing the ballot in or taking it to voting center; or if they lost the 'ballot my mail,' going to any voting center anywhere in the county and having the correct ballot for where they live/offices etc. they are voting on printed out. The County Elections Department They will have data on over 1 million ballots to present to the Board of Supervisors and the AZ Legislators to lobby for "Ballot By Mail" for the 2018 general election. If you have not seen or been part of a demo of the new system it is a MUST. We were encouraged to contact our District Supervisors and encourage adoption of the new system. People new to the round table were offered the opportunity to use it.

6) Re-precincting: Much ado about nothing. Not to be confused with redistricting. 6-1/2 years since last one. Supervisors all so new they have no experience with the process thus causing lots of confusion for everyone. This cleans up the lines drawn for present precincts and renames some, maybe.

7) Never Accounted for Registration Forms. Mary Fontes picked up where Adrian left off with the Prop 200 issue, as he excused himself to attend another meeting. Mary explained that between 2005-13 (the date of Prop 200 and the end of a court battle re NVRA that requires all who certify that they are citizens be able to vote for federal officers -- a law suit in which the LWV was very involved), 3,000 federal forms were rejected. Further, you may have heard about the infamous box of 96,000 plus voter registration forms from 2005-2013 that were rejected. The Maricopa County Elections Department has digitized them and is diligently following up on them. The issue comes down to: What is proof of citizenship? The prior Recorder's policy, based on the existing Secretary of State's Elections Procedure Manual, was that if a Federal Registration Form came in, staff checked to see if the person was also already considered to be a US citizen based on MVD data. If so, the person could vote the complete ballot. But if a regular state registration form came in without the necessary documentation re citizenship (driver's license after 1996, birth certificate/passport etc.) then the name/address was entered in a spreadsheet and a letter sent to the person asking for proof of citizenship (without any documentation that the letter was sent) and if no proof was received, the form was not processed, period. Instead it was put in a box and that was the end. Also, the spreadsheet was not accurately maintained so When Fontes came in and found all the boxes of not processed registration forms, he instructed staff to: a) enter all the information in a data base; b) look for other ways to prove citizenship, e.g., MVD records. (Earlier Fontes stated that even prior SOS Tom Horne, said that Fontes' interpretation of 'proof of citizenship' was correct.) Finally she stated that the SOS is currently working on an Elections Procedures Manual that prohibits what he and his office are doing!!!! However the draft manual will be published for prior comment and Mary Fontes will let us all know so we can comment. Ergo the flap about whose interpretation of the proposition will survive and how citizenship will be determined. Much time and effort is still being put into this project by the entire Records' Office to right a wrong and our opinion PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL MARICOPA COUNTY RESIDENTS, THAT QUALIFY, THE RIGHT TO REGISTER AND VOTE.

8) ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC): www.eric.org Is a new system (2012) being explored by MCED and the SOS to replace the Cross-Check system now being used by the SOS office to clean up voter registrations records. The SOS is the chief elections officer in our state and has that responsibility. Cross-Check has come under much scrutiny of late and Ms. Reagan has come around and is supportive of efforts to explore, purchase and implement the system in AZ. ERIC is funded by the Pew Charitable Trust. Maricopa County has agreed to pay \$130,000 towards this system, which must be purchased by the SOS for the entire state. ERIC will allow the Recorder to communicate more effectively with all those on the MVD system, will allow the Recorder's Office to follow up and send anyone in the MVD system who is not registered, info about registering and then continue to

[communicate with them. ERIC is proactive vs. Cross-Check being reactive \(and somewhat inaccurate\). The SOS is hoping to get ERIC active by September 2018; the Recorder wants it activated by Jan. 2018. Check out the website.](#)

The ERISA Industry Committee | ERIC

www.eric.org

ERIC encourages the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) to delay the implementation date for the proposed Department of Treasury rule on mortality ...

9) New Federal Compliance Officer. We were introduced to the new Federal Compliance Officer, Tonia Tunnell, and advised that she was there to address any future questions or concerns about voting.

10) Reynaldo (Rey) Valenzuela, Elections Director (btw, he is an extremely humorous guy who had everyone chuckling and laughing). He spoke about the details of how the next election (the Nov. 2017 'jurisdictional' election – school districts, fire districts, towns, etc. etc.) will be operated. There will be self check-in; at least 6 machine at each voting center and 12 at mega voting centers; voting centers will be open for 27 days before the actual Election Day to include the Friday, Sat. and Sunday before (because of current AZ law) early voting cannot take place the day before the election.

AZ law now says that there cannot be an all vote by mail election; and there cannot be early voting past 5 p.m. on Friday, which is based on the old idea of paper-eligible- voter rosters. The goal in the 2018 Legislative Session is NOT to delete that law or ask for all mail in elections but rather just to change the 5 p.m. deadline!!!

The County is 'rebranding' (see 5 above also) from "vote my mail" to "ballot by mail." EVERYONE who can vote in any of the jurisdictional elections will receive a 'ballot by mail'. There will be 160 voting centers all over the county; the new ballot by demand machines take only 8 seconds to print a ballot plus an envelope.

Also, the new machines are not provided by a 3rd party vendor so everything will be done in house.

The new system will eliminate provisional ballots in 99% of the cases and address the "I moved" issue (vs. 26,000 provisional ballots in 2016). The only provisional ballots with this new system will be when someone's name cannot be found in the system period.

Also, the new system/machines mean that there is no need for poll workers to show up the day before the election to 'set up' because the voting equipment will all be delivered, ready to use the Elections Department.